

Ray kin linked to King death

Washington — (UPI) — Mark Speiser, staff counsel of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, said yesterday that the committee has incriminating information linking a brother of James Earl Ray to an alleged conspiracy to finance the killing of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The committee heard testimony Wednesday about an alleged \$50,000 reward offered for Dr. King's death by two St. Louis men, now dead, and the possibility that James Earl Ray killed Dr. King in hopes of claiming the reward.

James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to shooting Dr. King and now is in prison in Tennessee.

His brother, Jerry Ray, appeared before the committee yesterday under subpoena and denied any knowledge of a \$27,000 bank robbery the committee suspects might have financed the assassination. Jerry Ray also denied that another Ray brother, John, took part.

John Ray, arrested Monday in St. Louis on burglary and assault charges, is also to appear before the panel.

Speiser said panel investigators have received "information of an incriminatory nature" that Jerry Ray participated in the robbery of an Alton, Ill., bank on July 13, 1967, presumably to provide funds for James Earl Ray to pursue and kill Dr. King and then flee.

Jerry Ray tried unsuccessfully to invoke the Fifth Amendment.

Speiser asked Jerry Ray: "Did you partake in that robbery?"

Ray: "I definitely did not."

Speiser asked whether John or James Earl Ray took part.

Ray: "No way. I wouldn't know."

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Jerry Ray told the committee he is now working for J.B. Stoner, of Atlanta, Ga., a white supremacist who is chairman of the National States Rights party. He said no one else will hire him because of constant "FBI harassment."

Asked about statements he allegedly made to writer Arthur George McMillan concerning James Earl Ray's escape from the Missouri State Penitentiary on April 23, 1967, Jerry Ray said he could not "remember all

this stuff."

"I don't remember saying that," said Jerry Ray, referring to a comment he allegedly made about his brother John helping James Earl escape from prison.

Jerry Ray described McMillan as a "leech" who hounded him for information after James Earl Ray was arrested in June 1968 and charged with the shooting of King in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968.

Chief committee counsel G. Robert Blakey said the panel may have the answer to the mysterious "Raoul" whom James Earl Ray has identified as his contact in the murder case.

"When you come down to it, the Raoul theory that seems to fit is that the mysterious accomplice might actually be one of Ray's brothers, Jerry or John, or a composite of the two of them," Blakey said.

Blakey said there was some evidence that Jerry or John Ray may have met with James at various places in the United States from the time James escaped from the Miss-

ouri State Prison until Dr. King's assassination.



Jerry Ray (left), brother of James Earl Ray, appeared before the House Assassinations

Committee in Washington yesterday with his attorney, Florence Kennedy.

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